GIRL AT THE HALFWAY HOUSE

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CHAPTER XVIII.

The Way of a Maid.

The Halfway House was an oasis in the desert. To-day it was an oasis and a battle ground. Franklin watched Mary Ellen as she passed quietly about the long, low room, engaged in household duties which she performed deftly as any servant. He compared these rude necessities with the asso-Ciations amid which he knew this girl had been nurtured, and the thought gave him nothing but dissatisfaction and rebellion. Presently he rose, and excusing himself, went out to join Buford at the corral.

"Come," said the latter, "and I'll show you around over our improvements while we are waitin' for a bite to eat. If ever this land comes to be worth anything at all, we ought to grow into something worth while!"

"Yes," said Franklin, "it will make you rich," and as they walked about he pointed out with Western enthusiasm the merits of the country.

The "bite to eat" was in time duly announced by a loud, sonorous note that arose swelling upon the air. Aunt Lucy appeared at the kitchen door, her fat cheeks distended, blowing a couch as though this were Tidewater | should settle it once for all. There over again.

The long table was spread in the large room of general assembly, this room being, as has been mentioned, excavated from the earth, so that, as they sat at table, their heads were perhaps nearly level with the surface of the ground. The short side walls, topped with a heavy earthen roof, nade of this sort of abode a domicile rude and clumsy enough, but one not lacking in a certain comfort. In the winter it was naturally warm, and in the summer it was cool, the air, caught at either end by the gable of the room, passing through and affording freshness to the somewhat cellarlike interior. Cut off from the main room were three smaller rooms, inciuding the kitchen, from which Aunt Lucy passed back and forth with massive tread. The table was no polished

again with a deep layer of earth. Franklin, standing upon a chair, put his shoulders under the sagging beams and lifted them and their load of disarranged earth up to the proper level on the top of the wall, while Buford built under them with sods. It was no small weight that he upheld. At he stood he caught an upturned telltale glance, a look of sheer feminine admiration for strength, but of this he could not be sure, for it passed fleetly as it came. He saw only the look of unconcern and heard only the conventional word of thanks.

As Mary Ellen stepped into the buggy for the return home her face had lost its pink. One of the mys terious revulsions of femininity had set in. Suddenly, it seemed to her she had caught herself upon the brink of disaster. This tall and manly man, she must not yield to this impulse to listen to him! She must not succumb to this wild temptation to put her head upon a broad shoulder and to let it lie there while she wept and rested. To her the temptation meant a personal shame. She resisted it with all her strength. The struggle left her pale and very calm. At last the way of duty was clear. This must be no renewal of this man's suit. He must go.

It was Mary Ellen's wish to be driven quickly to the house, but she reckoned without the man. With a sudden crunching of the wheels the buggy turned and spun swiftly on, headed directly away from home. "I'll just take you a turn around the hill," said Franklin, "and then we'll go in." "It isn't the way home," said Mary

"I can't help it," said Franklin. "You are my prisoner. I am going to take you-to the end of the world."

"It's very noble of you to take me this way!" said the girl with score. "What will my people think?"

"Let them think!" exclaimed Franklin desperately. "It's my only chance. I can't do without you! It's right for us both. You deserve a better life mahogany, but was built of rough pine | than this. You, a Beauchamp, of the

about toward the house, which was indeed becoming indistinct in the falling twilight. As the vehicle turned about, the crunching of the wheels started a great gray prairie owl, which rose almost beneath the horses' noses and flapped slowly off. The apparition set the wild black horse into a sudden simulation of terror, as though he had never before seen an owl upon the prairies. Rearing and plunging, he tore loose the book of one of the singletrees, and in a flash stood half free, at right angles now to the vehicle instead of at its front, and struggling to break loose from the neckyoke. In a flash Franklin saw that he was confronted with an ugly accident. He chose the only possible course, but handled the situation in the best possible way. With a sharp cut of the whip he drove the attached horse down upon the one that was half free, and started the two off at a wild race down the steep coules. into what seemed sheer blackness and ımmediate disaster. In some way, stumbling and bounding and lurching, both horses and vehicle kept upright all the way down the steep descent, a thing which to Franklin later seemed fairly miraculous. At the very foot of the pitch the black horse fell, the buggy running full over him as he lay lashing out. From this confusion, in some way never quite plain to himself, Franklin caught the girl out in his arms, and the next moment was at the head of the struggling horses. And so good had been his training at such matters that it was not without method that he proceeded to quiet the team and to set again in partial order the wreck that had been created in the gear. In time he had the team again in harness, and at the bottom of the coulee, where the ground sloped easily down into the open valley, whence they might emerge at the lower level of the prairie round about. He led the team for a distance down this floor of the coulee, until he could see the better going in the improving light which greeted them as they came out from the gullylike defile. He did not like to admit to his companion how great had been the actual danger just incurred, though fortunately escaped. Franklin was humiliated and ashamed, as a man always is over an accident.

Franklin wheeled the team sharply

"Oh, it's no good saying I'm sorry," he broke out at last. "It was my fault, letting you ride behind that brute. Thank God, you're not hurt! I'm always doing some unfortunate, ignoble thing."

"It wasn't ignoble," said the girl, and again he felt her hand upon his arm. "It was grand. You went straight, and you brought us through. I'm not hurt. I was frightened, but I am not hurt."

"You've pluck," said Franklin. Then, scorning to urge anything further of his suit at this time of her disadvantage, though feeling a strange new sense of nearness to her, now that they had seen this distress in common, he drove home rapidly as he might through the gathering dusk, anxious now only for her comfort. At the house he lifted her from the buggy, and as he did so klased her cheek. "Dear little woman," he whispered, "good-bye." Again he doubted whether he had heard or not the soft whisper of a faint "Good-bye!" "But you must come in," she said.

"No, I must go. Make my excuses," he said. "Good-bye!" The horses sprang sharply forward. He was

In her own little room Mary Ellen sat, her face where it might have been seen in profile had there been a light or had the distant driver looked round to see. Mary Ellen listened-listened until she could hear hoof and wheel no more. Then she cast herself upon the bed, face downward, and lay motionless and silent. Upon the little dresser lay a faded photograph, fallen forward also upon its face, lying unnoticed and apparently forgot.

(To be continued.) WAY TO ACQUIRE ELOQUENCE

Former Governor Black Did It Trying to Sell Sewing Machines.

Ex-Governor Frank S. Black became governor of New York through his eloquence. When he took the gavel as temporary chairman of the republican state convention of 1896 his name had not even been suggested for the nomination. After his opening speech, however, the whisper went around among the delegates. "What's the matter with Black for governor?" The following day the regular candidates were dropped and Mr. Black was nominated. After the convention Mr. Black told some friends how he acquired his elo-

quence. "When I was a young man," he said, "I went down from Troy to New England to make my fortune. I soon found that fortune was not running after me, and, when my funds ran low. I took the only job in sightthat of agent for a sewing machine. I traveled through the country districts selling machines, and in that way built up whatever eloquence I possess. You have no idea how hard it was to sell a machine in the backwoods in those days. Some of the tions of the devil, while others regarded them as swindling devices. Holding a convention spellbound is a cinch compared to the difficulty I had in convincing a farmer that a sewing

machine was a good thing."-Success. Distilled Spirits. be sent to his brother.

ILLINOIS NEWS

INTELLIGENCE OF THE DONKEY Two of the Brutes Save Life of Horse

by Their Sagacity. "You may talk about the intelligence of horses and dogs as much as you like, and I will agree with you every time, but I take my hat off to a pair of donkeys which I own," said C. F. Lathe of Lathe's island. "Right here I want to say that the donkey is much more intelligent than most people imagine. One night I was sitting in the house after supper, when the two donkeys out in the barn began to bray and kept it up incessantly until I knew that something was wrong. I went out to the barn and looked around, finding that old Bob, one of the horses, was not in his stall. I asked the men about it, and they said that he had not come up from the pasture. Then I called the horse, but could get no answer to tell me where to look for him, but the donkeys kept on braying, and I knew that the horse was in trouble. I wanted to find out what had happened, of course, but I was also anxious to put a stop to that unearthly noise. Finally, in desperation, I let the donkeys out of the barn, and, like a flash, they disappeared in the darkness. I couldn't begin to keep up with them, but their voices guided me to where old Bob which was partly filled with water. His four feet were sticking straight up in the air, but he managed to keep his nose above the shallow water. We got him to his feet and you never saw animals more tickled than those two donkeys were. They fairly danced with joy and capered back to the barn, one on each side of the borse which owed his life to them. You needn't believe the story if you don't want to. In fact, I don't expect you will, but it is a fact just the same."

Hunter is Accidentally Killed. Wilbon Allen of Cordova met shocking death while out hunting. He and his companion, George Cool, stopped to rest for a moment, laying their guns on the ground. When they were ready to start again Cool picked up the shotgun to hand to his companion. The trigger caught in the grass and discharged the whole load into Allen's head.

Police Matron Gets Ducking. Police Matron Mrs. Demuth of Alton was given a surprise when a young prisoner dumped a bucketful of cold water over her head. The prisoner was washing windows and asked the police matron to assist him in getting the backet of water up to where he was standing. The overturning of the water is said to have been intentional.

Cancels City Warrants.

City Comptroller Thornton has reported to the Alton city council that an aggregate of \$14,256.56 in city warrants is in his possession unclaimed. The council has authorized him to cancel them. The unclaimed warrants were drawn to pay the New England waterworks company for fire protection up to a year ago.

Pays Sweetheart's Fine. Lizzie Chrisnell and Monroe Clay, colored, were married in East Louis, following the discharge of the Chrisnell woman from the jail. Clay came from Cincinnati, Ohio, to marry the woman. On arriving in Belleville he paid Sheriff Thompson \$37, the amount of the Chrisnell woman's fine remaining unpaid.

School Board Is Economical. The annual statement of directors of the Alta Sita schools showed that the board had reduced the taxes for the support of the schools of the district for the year. A motion prevailed to rent the colored Baptist church for the colored school children of the district, the regular school having been blown down.

Wine W. C. T. U. Prize, The Women's Christian temperance union of Saline county closed its annual institute at Harrisburg with an oratorical contest in which seven contestants took part. Miss Mary Mc-Gebie of Harrisburg was awarded the prize, a beautiful gold medal.

Knights to Enter Drift. U. S. Grant company, No. 24, uniform rank, Knights of Pythias of Mattoon, has decided to enter the compe-

itive drills at the national conclave.

Wrong Use of Union Cards. Union labor men have requested the police to stop beggars imposing on charitable people in Alton by display-

Miner is injured.

ing union cards.

Fred Reichert, a coal miner, was caught under a fall of stone and slate in a mine at Belleville and sustained serious injuries.

Dies in South Africa.

News has just been received that Harry R. Stive, brother of J. Stive of Decatur, was killed recently in South Africa, while serving as a British soldier. Deceased served in the Spanish-American war as a rough rider, but soon after being mustered out joined the British navy and died as a member of Bethune's mounted infantry. He was one of a body of men which was instrumental in saving Lord Kitchener's life, and was awarded a medal of honor, which will ago, and still bears marks of

FEAR THAT

Residents of St. Clair County Are Alarmed About Garden Creps. The residents of the western portion of St. Clair county from the bluffs to the Mississippi river are greatly alarmed for fear the lakes in that section will overflow and destroy the early garden crops in Cahokia commons. No fear is expressed because of the present stage of water in the river, but the landowners declare that they are afraid the lakes will rise higher because the drainage commissioners iniled to levy a drainage tax sufficient to open the old canal at the proper time so as to allow the water to escape. The old board of commissioners consisted of Charles Goedde, Clestine Ettlenne 23508|9(mfwy fwyp fw tine Ettienne and Amand Roustio. These gentlemen claim that they did not have sufficient funds to do the work or they would have opened the

TEACHERS' PRESIDENT.

canal from one end to the other.

J. K. Stableton, who was the choice of the Central Illinois Teachers' asso ciation for president at the Danville convention, is one of the most pro gressive educators in the state and is a leading member of the Illinois



three years superintendent of the schools of Bloomington and has been given a handsome increase in salary each year. He held a three-year position of the same kind with the Charleston, III., schools and previous to that time taught in Nebraska. He is a Harvard graduate.

Teachers' Strike is Settled.

The strike of the school teachers of Carterville, who went out on a strike because the board of education had discharged one of the corps for inflicting too severe punishment on one of the pupils, has been amicably settled and the schools have been reopened. On the reassembling of the school Prof. W. J. Turner, who has been superintendent for many years, tendered his resignation, to take effect the act, but it is presumed the settle | ing a total of 3,732. ment of the strike forced his retire-

Leiter in Trouble With Miners.

A serious condition confronts the operations of Joe Leiter at the new town of Zeigler owing to the refusal of the union miners to longer work. At the opening of his plant, which is being developed into one of the largest collieries in southern Illinois, Leiter refused to recognize the various unions, and when the coal began to be mined he refused to collect the dues for the miners' union, as is done in every coal shaft but one other in Hinois. A struggle will be made to unionize his shaft, and serious trouble is expected.

Barbers Will Not Raise Prices. The Alton barbers' union has passed a law putting a penalty of \$10 upon any member wto dares to broach the subject of raising the prices from 10 to 15 cents for a shave and from 25 to 35 cents for a haircut. The quection has been under discussion for some time and was voted upon at a tecent meeting, the proposition to make the increase being defeated by a nearly unanimous vote. Then resolution was offered and adopted imposing the fine. Some of the barbers say that the measure is a violation of their constitutional rights.

Seeking Her Half-Brother. Mrs. Dollie Deckert of East St. Louis is anxious to find her halfbrother, Henry Howard, from wnom she was separated when they were quite young. She believes that he was adopted by a family by the name of Knight.

Farmers' Institute.

The committee for the Farmers' institute of the twentieth congressional district has set November 10, 11 and 12 as the dates for the Calhoun county Farmers' institute. The congressional district institute will be held at Hardin at the same time.

Lightning Strikes Twice. Lightning struck a tree on the place of Herman Stiritz at North Alton, The same tree was struck twenty years

Car Cleaner Gets \$50 for Pocketbook With 611.

William Clark, a cleaner of the East St. Louis street railway pany, was liberally rewarded I honesty. O. S. Hoard Finney Louis lost a wallet containing \$11 valuable papers on an east sid The package was found by Clark, reported the matter to his em When Mr. Finney reported his the police of East St. Louis Det James Neville went immediate the office of the company and for information. He was told that t book had been found, but that Cla was sick. The party went out Clark's house, and after securing the book Mr. Finney handed Clark a \$50 bill, with the statement that the p pers in the wallet were very valuable

STATE SUNDAY SCHOOL MEET

One Thousand Delegates Are Expented to Assemble at Matteon.

The state Sunday School convention will be held in Mattoon May 14, 15 and 16. Active preparations for the enters tainment of the thousand delegates have commenced, and the following chairme of committees have been appointed: Executive committee, Rev. was lying flat on his back in a gully, Schoolmasters' club. He has been for J. B. Horney; entertainment committee, G. H. Cokendolpher; reception committee, Mrs. Kate Rogers; decorstion committee, C. H. Baker; finance committee, Edward Guthrie; press committee, Dr. Charles Boax; nahers and page committee, W. R. Coppage.

> Four Generations Dine. Four generations dined at the home of James Goff, supervisor of the poor of East St. Louis. At the head of the table sat "Grandma" Ellen Devere, who represented the first generation. She is the mother of Mrs. James Goff. Beside her sat Marie Knubel, 'the baby daughter of Mrs. Devere's granddaughter, Mrs. Knuebel, who was formerly Miss Goff. A number of friends of the Goff family attended a reception which was held later in the day. The direct line of the four generations consisted of Mrs. Devere, Mrs. James Goff, Mrs. Knuebel and baby Marie Knuebel.

Holds Marriage Record. Within the last six months there have been a dozen marriages in and around the village of Bethalto, and the number of couples who have united their fortunes is far greater than the usual proportion to population. It is claimed by Bethalto people that their village of 500 inhabitants holds the record for the number of marriages within 18 months. It is also said that there is hardly a couple in the village of marriageable age still unmarried.

Increase of Crime.

According to the report presented to the board of supervisors in Belleville by the special committee on the investigation of the accounts and records of county offices, the number of prisoners received at the county jail for the past five years is as follows: Dec. 5, 1898, to Dec. 4, 1899, 413; 1899 to 1900, 528; 1900 to 1901, 753; 1901 immediately. No cause is given for to 1902, 816; 1902 to 1902, 1,222, mak-

> Geta Judgment for \$1,300. Miss Julia Tarbell was awarded a judgment for \$1,300 by a jury in the circuit court in Belleville against J. T. Donovan of East St. Louis. Miss Turbell was employed in the home of Donovan about one year ago, and she alleged that she gave him \$1,300 to invest for her and that he gave her papers in return, but that she never received the real value for them.

> > In Jail for Killing Man.

Walter Power of Farrington township is now lodged in the county fall on account of killing Cleveland Adams. Adams was hit twice, the fatal shot passing through his right lung. According to the evidence at the coroner's inquest, there has been bad blood between the young men for some time. Both were accustomed to CAPTY WEADORS.

Did Not KIN Wife. in the circuit court at Waterloo Anton Stoeckel, charged with killing his wife, was acquitted. His children testifled and from their evidence it appeared the tragedy was due to an secident.

Death Rate is increasing. The death rate is rapidly increasing at Springfield. There were 111 death certificates issued during March this year, against 44 for the corresponding month of 1903.

Advance in Wages. Carpenters of Alton have been given

an advance to 40 cents an hour and the bricklayers have been granted an Increase to 65 cents an hour.

Hand in Feed Cutter.

Willie, the young son of Wm. Ashauer of Belleville, while playing with a feed cutter, in company with eral companions, got his hand dr into the machine, resulting in is ing it severely.

Carpenters Strike at Harri

As though this were Tidewater again.

boards, and along it stood long old Virginia Beauchamps good God! benches instead of chairs.

"You will oblige me, captain," said Buford as they rose from the table, "if you will be so good as to drive Miss Beauchamp over to the claim shanty after a while."

Franklin assented to this proposition with such eagerness that he blushed as he saw how evident had been his pleasure at this opportunity for a moment's speech alone with the girl who sat so near but yet so unapproachable. "I'll be delighted," said

spot in her cheek was plainly deeper. ft did not lessen as she stood watching the struggle the two men had in again hitching to the buggy the wild black horse. Seiging the tug with one hand and the singletree with the other. Franklin fairly swept the obdurate beast off its balance as he forced it to its place at the pole. His

strength was apparent. "Are you afraid to ride behind that

borse?" asked he. "I don't think so," she replied sim-Franklin steadled the team. Yet how during the short drive to the shanty | going to-going to keep my promise, the beast gave him plenty to do to keep it inside the harness, and he had no time for a single word. The girl sat silent at his side, looking At the shanty he helped her down. Ignorant, he saw not the tale of a bosom heaving, nor read correctly the story of the pink in the cheek. He believed rather the import of a face turned away, and of

There had as yet been no word. some need of repair. One corner of to take care of you. I wanted to love the roof had fallen in, carrying with it | you and to see if I couldn't make a | farmers thought they were invena portion of the sod wall that made the inclosure, and spilling a quantity of earth in the bed customarily occupled by Aunt Lucy when she "resided" here in company with her mistress in their innocent process of acquiring one hundred and sixty acres of land aptece by means of a double dwelling a whisper, a soft word that said "goodplace.

features set in a mask of repose.

In order to make the needed repairs to the roof, it was necessary to lay up again a part of the broken wall, then to hoist the fallen rafters into place prior to covering the whole dark."

It breaks my heart!" "You have answered yourself, sir," said Mary Ellen, her voice not steady as she wished. "I live out here on the prairies, far from home, but I am a Beauchamp from old Virginia."

"And then?" "And the Beauchamps kept their promises, women and men-they always kept them. They always will."

"I know," said Franklin gently. would rely on your word forever. would risk my life and my honor in your hands. I would believe in you Mary Ellen said nothing. The pink | all my life. Can't you do as much for me? There is no stain on my name I will love you till the end of the world. Child-you don't know---"

"Ah, you have your answer! Now, listen to me, Mr. Franklin, I shall keep my promise as a Beauchamp should—as a Beauchamp shall. I have told you long ago what that promise was. I promised to love, to marry him-Mr. Henry Fairfax-years ago. I promised never to love any one else so long as I lived. He-he's keeping his promise now-back there-in old ply, and her uncle helped her in, while | Virginia, now. How would I be keeping mine-how am I keeping mine, Franklin hated the wild black horse now, even listening to you so long? now! All the way across the prairie | Take me back; take me home. I'm

> sir! I'm going to keep it!" Franklin sat cold and dumb at this, all the world seeming to him to have gone quite blank. He could not at first grasp this sentence in its full effect, it meant so much to him. Yet, after his fashion, he fought mute, struggling for some time before he dared trust his voice or his emotions.

"Very well," he said. "I'll not crawl -not for any woman on earth! It's over. I'm sorry. Dear little woman, The claim shanty was indeed in I wanted to be your friend. I wanted future for us both."

> "My future is done. Leave me. Find some one else to love." "You were the only one," said

Franklin slowly, "and you always will

be the only one. Good-bye." It seemed to him he heard a breath, bye." It had a tenderness that set a lump in his throat, but it was followed almost at once with a calmer commonplace. "We must go back," said Mary Ellen. "It is growing

The spirits distilled in the United States for the fiscal year amounted to 141,000,000 gallons; an increase of 13, 000,000 gallons over the previous year, although the number of distillaries diminished 497.